



Oyfn Veg
(On the Road):
A Symposium on Canadian Jewish Studies
In honour of
Professor Gerald Tulchinsky

University of Toronto
Jackman Humanities Building, Room 101
Sunday November 17, 2013

PROGRAMME

In appreciation to the generous sponsors of this symposium:



Welcome

On behalf of my fellow organizers, Randal Schnoor and David Koffman, I welcome you to

Ofyn Veg: A Symposium on Canadian Jewish Studies in Honour of Gerald Tulchinsky.

We are proud to have the opportunity to shine a bright light on the contributions that Professor Tulchinsky has made and continues to make to our understanding of the history and culture of Canada's Jews. For the last three decades, he has been an avid researcher, one who has broken new ground in the study of business, identity politics, immigration, labour and ethno-cultural development. His publications are our leading sources on Canadian Jewry, written in a narrative style that brings the lives, achievements, struggles and failures of his subjects to life.

The respect accorded to Professor Tulchinsky in the Canadian Academy is evident in this Symposium. Some twenty scholars of Canadian Society have eagerly accepted the opportunity to be with us today. Their papers and responses cover some of the key areas of Professor Tulchinsky's research, including immigration, identity, antisemitism, human rights, radical politics, defence, and business history. Central to his writing, and to this symposium, is Professor Tulchinsky's contention that one cannot study Canadian Jewry in isolation, but rather within the context of Canadian Studies.

This Symposium could not have been possible without the support of:

The Harry and Sylvia Rosen Memorial Symposia Fund, Jewish Studies, Queen's University

The Association for Canadian Jewish Studies

The Centre for Jewish Studies, University of Toronto

The Israel and Golda Koschitzky Centre for Jewish Studies, York University

The Robarts Centre for Canadian Studies, York University

The Department of History, York University

The Vered Jewish Canadian Studies Program, University of Ottawa

The Institute for Canadian Jewish Studies, Concordia University

The Canadian Studies Program, University College, University of Toronto

Thank you and enjoy the symposium!

Franklin Bialystok, University of Toronto

Gerald Tulchinsky



Professor Emeritus Gerald Tulchinsky

Born and raised in Brantford, Ontario, Dr. Tulchinsky studied at McGill and the University of Toronto. He taught at the University of Saskatchewan before joining the faculty at Queen's in 1966, where he taught history until 1999. He was involved with the creation of the Jewish Studies program, which he sees as an important aspect of Canadian history, and remained involved with it until 2002.

Dr. Tulchinsky is the author of many papers and has published critically-acclaimed books: *The River Barons*, a study of Montreal businessmen; *Taking Root: The Origins of the Canadian Jewish Community*, covering the period from 1762 to 1920; *Branching Out: The Transformation of the Canadian Jewish Community*; *Canada's Jews: A Peoples' Journey*; and *Joe Salsberg: A life of Commitment*, which was published this year.

It is clear that at age 80, the topic still fascinates Dr. Tulchinsky.

"The history of the Jewish community in Canada says as much about the development of the nation as it does about the Jewish people," he says.

That's why he is pleased to be named for the Symposium on Canadian Jewish Studies, which he believes will serve as an "excellent launch pad for further investigation."

(Excerpted from Anita Jansman, "Gerald Tulchinsky", Queen's University News Service)

PROGRAMME

9:00am - Welcome

9:10am – “The Road Ahead: History, Memory and Identity in the Canadian Jewish Landscape”. *Franklin Bialystok, University of Toronto*

9:30am – 12:45pm - MORNING PANELS – Chair: *Randal Schnoor, York University*

9:30am – 11:00am Panel One: *Moderator: Emily Gilbert, University of Toronto*

“Canadian Jews: Transnationalism and Competing or Conflicting Identities and Loyalties”. *Morton Weinfeld, McGill University*

“Morris Saxe Meets the Immigration Maze, 1925 – 1945”. *Jack Lipinsky, Robbins Hebrew Academy*

Discussant: *Michael Brown, York University*

11:00am – 11:15am - Coffee Break

11:15am – 1245pm Panel Two: *Moderator: Jeffrey Kopstein, University of Toronto*

“*Nit Ahin un nit aher*”: Yiddish Scholarship in Canada. *Pierre Anctil, University of Ottawa*

“Antisemitism in Quebec”. *Ira Robinson, Concordia University*

Discussant: *Rebecca Margolis, University of Ottawa*

12:45pm – 1:30pm – Lunch Break

1:30pm – 4:45pm – AFTERNOON PANELS: *Chair: David Koffman, York University*

1:30pm – 3:00pm Panel Three: *Moderator: Carl S. Ehrlich, York University*

“Rethinking the History of Depression Era Communism in Canada”. *Ian McKay, Queen’s University*

“Gender, Class and Ethnic Dynamics among Jewish Labour Activists and Jewish Human Rights Activists”. *Ruth Frager, McMaster University and Carmela Patrias, Brock University*

Discussant: Jennifer Stephen, York University

3:00pm – 3:15pm - Coffee Break

3:15pm – 4:45pm – Panel Four: *Moderator: Howard Tzvi Adelman, Queen’s University*

“Skating on Thick Ice: Tulchinsky and Business History”. *Michael Bliss, Professor Emeritus, University of Toronto*

“Ethnic and Religious Enlistment in Canada During the Second World War”. *Jack Granatstein, Past Director and CEO, Canadian War Museum*

Discussant: Gerald Tulchinsky, Professor Emeritus, Queen’s University

4:45pm – 5:15pm IN APPRECIATION

Chair: Howard Tzvi Adelman, Director, Jewish Studies Programme, Queen’s University

Gordon Dueck, Department of History, Queen’s University, and Jennifer Stephen, Department of History, York University, former undergraduate students of Professor Tulchinsky

5:15pm – 5:30pm A por verter (a few words): *Gerald Tulchinsky*

ABSTRACTS

Pierre Anctil

“Nit ahin un nit aher – Yiddish Scholarship in Canada

In the last generation, scholarship on Yiddish culture and literature has tended to be neglected at best, if not outright absent from the field of Canadian Jewish Studies. This is not due to the fact that the subject deserves no attention or is perceived as insignificant in the historical trajectory of Canadian Jewry, but rather that few researchers can master the language itself or navigate its many cultural complexities. Such a state of affairs has tended to make it very difficult in our day and age for scholars to partake in the exploration of the great migration (1904-1914) or to comment on the many layers of East European influence present in Canada at various historical moments in the twentieth century. This is all the more tragic since many Yiddish Canadian authors of the immigrant period had developed early on – in Yiddish – an original notion of Canadian Jewish history, which is for all intents and purposes is no longer accessible. For this reason, the dominant historical narrative seems at times without solid foundations, and pointed more intently toward an understanding of the contemporary situation than the relatively distant past.

Michael Bliss

"Skating on Thick Ice: Tulchinsky and Business History"

Graduate students in Canadian history in the 1960s, especially, seemed to be on the verge of a new golden age of productive and specialized scholarship. The old emphasis on national political history was being replaced by multiple opportunities to specialize in the subfields of Canadian history. One of these wide open fields was Canadian business history. In his doctoral thesis, and his first book, *The River Barons*, Gerry Tulchinsky was a pioneer explorer of new historical territory. His method was to build a solid foundation (skating on thick ice), based on exhaustive research. In *The River Barons* he used his material to undercut old assumptions about Laurentian and Montreal business in several ways.

Gerry's continuing interest in Canadian business history found some later expression in similarly exhaustive preliminary studies of the clothing industry. But a funny thing happened to some of us who in the sixties and seventies thought we were on the forefront of the new wave of historical specialization. Our interest in our own roots, ethnic and other, kept interfering. Gerry Tulchinsky was not the only one of his generation who decided to move on, into even newer and perhaps even more promising fields of history. By being called back into our own past, we then moved forward in a different direction. Of course it's too bad that Canadian business history was effectively abandoned, and has never quite recovered as a field of study.

Ruth Frager, Carmela Patrias

"Gender, Class, and Ethnic Dynamics among Jewish Labour Activists and Jewish Human Rights Activists"

Focusing on Toronto, Montreal, and Winnipeg, this paper explores the historical interplay of Jewish identity, class politics, and gender dynamics in the Jewish labour movement from the turn of the twentieth century to the Second World War and in the postwar human rights campaigns. Despite concerns that Jewish labour militancy could fuel anti-Semitism, intense class conflict broke out, especially in the clothing industry where many workers and manufacturers were Jews. Yet sometimes the need to combat anti-Semitism drew working-class and middle-class Jews together, as, for example, when they worked jointly to help Jews who were caught in the wave of pogroms in Eastern Europe in the wake of the First World War.

In the aftermath of the Second World War, there were especially strong united efforts to combat anti-Semitism as well as other forms of racism in Canada. Although the heads of the Jewish Labour Committee and the Canadian Jewish Congress had each originally intended to embark on human rights campaigns independently of one another, they came to work closely together despite ideological differences and initial tensions.

Yet amidst the complex interplay of Jewish identity and class politics, women's rights were seldom an issue. Although immigrant Jewish women displayed dramatic working-class militancy, their emphasis on both class consciousness and ethnic identity inhibited the development of feminist perspectives. In the aftermath of the Second World War, Jewish human rights activists also lacked not only a commitment to women's rights but even an awareness that women faced special forms of discrimination.

Jack Granatstein

"Ethnic and Religious Enlistment in Canada during the Second World War"

In the 1939-45 war, Canada raised military forces of 1.1 million men and women and suffered some 45,000 killed in action and in training. Given the threats to democracy and to North America, was this the appropriate response? Or should more effort have been devoted to industrial and agricultural production? Was manpower appropriately organized with enough men and women allocated to industry and to the armed forces? Who worked and who did not? Who served in the armed forces and who did not? Why? What, if anything, was different from both industrial mobilization and military enlistment in the Great War? This brief paper will attempt to raise questions about the war that have yet to be satisfactorily answered.

Jack Lipinsky

"Morris Saxe Meets the Immigration Maze, 1925-1945."

Morris Saxe seemed the epitome of the desirable Canadian immigrant. A trained European farmer, he quickly adapted to Canadian conditions, opened a creamery in Acton, and became a successful entrepreneur. Convinced of the value of farming for Jewish youth, he planned a Canadian Jewish Farm School and obtained backing from communal leaders in Toronto and Montreal. He approached the Immigration Department after securing recommendation from Ontario's Agricultural Minister in 1925. This meant of course that his proposal had to be vetted by Frederick C. Blair, whose consistent efforts at keeping Canada's gates barred to Jews has been extensively documented. Interestingly, both Blair and Saxe had a great deal in common: their age, that both became widowers around the same time, a shared belief in the value of agrarian work, and their desire to ensure that immigrants complied with the regulations. Nonetheless, their lengthy correspondence also underscored the deep differences in values and expectations. Surprisingly, Saxe's work did not always capture the approbation of his community, and the Farm School's ultimate failure reflected deep and significant intra-ethnic fault lines that make this case a microcosm of what *None is Too Many* so effectively explored—albeit with some novel twists.

Ian McKay

"Rethinking the History of Depression Era Communism in Canada"

Communists in Canada were "Soldiers of the International," who blindly accepted line-changes from Moscow, practiced an authoritarian top-down vanguard politics, and created a monolithic, dictatorial movement indifferent to the specific contours of Canada's various ethnic, linguistic, gendered and class communities. Until the last decade, such was the tenor of writing, not abundant in any case, about the Communist movement in Canada. Yet this stereotypical portrait of the Communist movement, as recent work in the papers of the Communist International and careful local histories has shown, is highly misleading. Drawing upon this recent work, of which Gerald Tulchinsky's recent biography of J.B.Salsberg is a shining example, I argue that the new historiography on Communism in Canada in the 1930s suggests that it constituted a much more dynamic, complicated and above all interesting movement of movements than the existing literature typically allows. It was, in many key respects, almost the exact opposite of a monolithic party dominated by a dictatorial leadership effectively wielding an externally-imposed line. In escaping from this older way of thinking about the history of Communism, we open up exciting new areas of inquiry into, and potentially illuminating debates about, the many worlds of Depression-era Canadian revolutionaries.

Ira Robinson

"Antisemitism in Quebec"

The issue of the historical relationship between Jews and French Canadians is not merely fundamentally important for any responsible presentation of the historical development of Jews in Canada, it is also arguably the most controversial. Analyses of antisemitism in Quebec vary widely, to say the least. Moreover, the issue of historic antisemitism in Quebec is one of the few issues dealt with in the field of Canadian Jewish history that has become a major and sustained subject for public media discourse and controversy in Quebec and elsewhere. It is, in other words, a public issue debated not merely in scholarly journals but in the op-ed pages of the Quebec daily press in both French and English. If for no other reason the subject deserves our close attention. This article is not and does not pretend to be a comprehensive look at antisemitism in Quebec, for it does not directly address the considerable and related question of antisemitism as it manifested itself in English Canada (including Quebec). It should rather be considered a series of reflections on an issue that has merited considerable and sustained scholarly and public attention.

Morton Weinfeld

"Canadian Jews: Transnationalism and Competing or Conflicting Identities and Loyalties"

This paper explores the issue of competing identities and loyalties for Jews in Canada. The context is Canadian diversity and multiculturalism, as well as the current forces of transnationalism and globalization. It is argued that competing identities and loyalties are real, and they must be negotiated by Canadian Jews who are both committed Jews, often involving ties to Israel, and strongly committed to Canada. Examples of such negotiations are analyzed, in confidence, for a variety of Canadian Jewish personalities.

BIOGRAPHIES

Howard Tzvi Adelman is the Director of the Jewish Studies Program at Queen's University, where he is also cross-appointed to the History Department, the long-time academic home of Gerry Tulchinsky. Before coming to Queen's, he was Director of Jewish Studies at Smith College and then taught in Israel. His field of research is early modern Italian Jewry, currently finishing a book on women in the family and progressing in a book on Leon Modena, a seventeenth century Venetian rabbi and critic of Jewish tradition.

Pierre Anctil is a full professor in the department of history of the University of Ottawa, where he teaches contemporary Canadian history. He has written at length on the history of the Jewish community of Montréal and on the current debates on cultural pluralism in Montreal. He has recently published *Trajectoires juives au Québec* (Presses de l'Université Laval 2010) and, in collaboration with Ira Robinson, *Les communautés juives de Montréal, histoire et enjeux contemporains* (Septentrion, 2010). In 2011 he co-directed with Howard Adelman a book entitled: *Religion, Culture and the State, Reflections on the Bouchard-Taylor Report* (University of Toronto Press). He is the author in 2012 of a book length biography of Jacob-Isaac Segal entitled: *Jacob-Isaac Segal (1896-1954), un poète yiddish de Montréal et son milieu* (Presses de l'Université Laval).

Franklin Bialystok teaches in the Canadian Studies Programme at University College. His doctoral dissertation, *Delayed Impact: The Holocaust and the Canadian Jewish Community* was published in 2000 and reissued in 2010. It received the Tannenbaum Award for Canadian Jewish History and was nominated for the Governor-General's and Canadian Historical Association Awards. His most recent publication is "Post-War Canadian Jewry" in *Canada's Jews in Time, Space and Spirit*. He is writing a history of Canada's Jews for undergraduate students for the University of Toronto Press.

Michael Bliss overlapped with Gerry Tulchinsky as a graduate student in Canadian history in the 1960s. He was then hired at the University of Toronto where he spent his career. He retired in 2006 and is now University Professor Emeritus. He, too, began work in Canadian business history, and, also honouring his roots, moved on to different arenas, especially the study of the history of medicine, a field in which he has published six books.

Michael Brown is professor emeritus and senior scholar at York University, where he is a member of the Departments of History, Humanities, and Languages (Hebrew). He was a founder of York's Jewish Studies Program, served as director of the Centre for Jewish Studies, now the Israel and Golda Koschitzky Centre, and has been the co-director of the Mark and Gail Appel Program for Holocaust and Anti-Racism Education. The last is a program for Canadian, German, and Polish students and for which Brown and his co-director, Mark Webber, were honoured by Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznan. Brown writes mostly about North American Jews.

Gordon Dueck teaches modern Jewish history in the Department of History at Queen's University. He earned his B.A. at the University of Winnipeg, his M.A. at Dalhousie University, under the supervision of Dr. Daniel Woolf (current principal of Queen's), and his Ph.D. at Queen's University under Gerald Tulchinsky. In addition to the Holocaust course that Tulchinsky created two decades ago, Dueck teaches courses on secular Jewish identity, Jewish representations in film, and the role of Jews in the development of multiculturalism. He is working on a book about "Hester Street," an influential independent film made in the 1970s.

Carl S. Ehrlich has been Professor of Hebrew Bible in the Department of Humanities at York University since 1996, where he has also served as Coordinator of Religious Studies and Director of the Centre for Jewish Studies. Professor Ehrlich has authored *The Philistines in Transition: A History from ca. 1000-730 B.C.E.* (1996), *Understanding Judaism* (2004, reprinted: 2010 and translated into a number of languages), and *Bibel und Judentum: Beiträge aus dem christlich-jüdischen Gespräch* (2004), and (co-)edited *Saul in Story and Tradition* (2006), *From an Antique Land: An Introduction to Ancient Near Eastern Literature* (2009), and *Purity, Holiness, and Identity in Judaism and Christianity: Essays in Memory of Susan Haber* (2013). In 2010-2011 he probably set some sort of record by teaching courses at six universities in four countries on two continents in two languages during a twelve-month period.

Ruth A. Frager is associate professor of history at McMaster University. She is the author of *Sweatshop Strife: Class, Ethnicity, and Gender in the Jewish Labour Movement of Toronto, 1900-1939* and co-author (with Carmela Patrias) of *Discounted Labour: Women Workers in Canada, 1870-1939*. Her most recent article, "Communities and Conflicts: East European Jewish Immigrants in Ontario and Quebec from the Late 1800s through the 1930s," appears in *Canada's Jews: In Time, Space, and Spirit* (edited by Ira Robinson).

Emily Gilbert is the Director of the Canadian Studies program at the University of Toronto, where she holds a cross-appointment with the Department of Geography. Her current research deals with questions relating to money, citizenship, borders, security, militaries and militarization. She is co-editor of *War, Citizenship, Territory* (with Deborah Cowen) and *Nation-States and Money: The Past, Present and Future of National Currencies* (with Eric Helleiner).

Jack Granatstein served in the Canadian Army then taught Canadian history for thirty years. He is an Officer in the Order of Canada, a Senior Research Fellow of the Canadian Defence and Foreign Affairs Institute, was Director and CEO of the Canadian War Museum, and writes on Canadian military history, foreign and defence policy, and public policy. Among his publications are *Canada 1957-67*, *Canada's War*, *The Generals*, *Canada's Army*, *Who Killed Canadian History?*, and *The Oxford Companion to Canadian Military History*.

David S. Koffman is an assistant professor in the Department of History at York University. He is a cultural and social historian of the modern Jewish experience in Canada and the US (PhD, N.Y.U., 2011). His work has focused on encounters between Jews and Native Americans in the 19th and early 20th centuries, and on circumcision debates at the intersection of medicine and religion in public life. He is the co-editor of the journal *Canadian Jewish Studies*.

Jeffrey Kopstein is Professor of Political Science and Director of the Centre for Jewish Studies at the University of Toronto. He has held fellowships at Harvard University, Princeton University and from the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation. His most recent publications are "Deadly Communities: Local Political Milieus and the Persecution of Jews in Occupied Poland," (with Jason Wittenberg in *Comparative Political Studies*, vol. 44, no. 5, May 2011, 259-283) and "Between Nationalization and Internationalization: Electoral Behavior in Interwar Poland" (with Jason Wittenberg in *POLIN: Studies in Polish Jewry*, vol. 24, November 2011). He has also published *The Politics of Economic Decline in East Germany, 1945-1989*, University of North Carolina Press, (1997), and *Comparative Politics: Identities, Institutions, and Interests in a Changing Global Order*, ed. with Mark Lichbach (Cambridge University Press, 2000, 2005, 2009); *Growing Apart? America and Europe in the 21st Century*, ed. with Sven Steinmo (Cambridge University Press, 2007). He is currently completing a new book: *Intimate Violence: Anti-Jewish Riots as Prelude to the Holocaust*.

Jack Lipinsky focuses on Canadian Jewish interwar institutional history. He is the author of *Imposing Their Will: an Organizational History of Jewish Toronto, 1933-48* and is now researching a book on Jewish farmers in Ontario. Jack is a Curriculum Writer and Online Course Facilitator for Facing History and Ourselves. He is presently enrolled in the York University Faculty of Education while on educational sabbatical from Robbins Hebrew Academy. Jack has served as the Spiritual Leader of the Stashow-Slipi Congregation for over three decades, and earned his doctorate in Canadian History from the University of Toronto.

Rebecca Margolis is associate professor in the University of Ottawa's Vered Canadian Jewish Studies program, where she teaches courses on the Canadian Jewish experience as well as Yiddish language and culture. She holds a PhD in Yiddish Studies from Columbia University, which is where she first encountered Jerry Tulchinsky during a guest lecture. Her research centers on Yiddish culture in Canada, and more recently on the Holocaust in Canadian life. Her articles have appeared in numerous journals including *Canadian Jewish Studies*, *Shofar*, *TTR*, *Nashim*, and her essays have been published in the *Canadian Jewish Studies Reader*, *Choosing Yiddish*, and others. Her book, *Jewish Roots, Canadian Soil: Yiddish Culture in Montreal, 1905-1945*, was awarded a Canadian Jewish Book award as well as a J.I. Segal prize. Her current research project examines Yiddish in Canada as a response to the Holocaust.

Ian McKay has taught in the history department of Queen's University, Kingston, since 1988. Winner of the John A. Macdonald Prize on 2008 for the first major volume in his series on the history of the Canadian left, he is at work on the second --provisionally titled *Revolution's Iron Gates*--which will focus on the left-wing Canadians who aimed to build a revolutionary movement between 1921 and 1948.

Carmela Patrias is professor of history at Brock University. Her publications include *Jobs and Justice: Fighting Discrimination in Wartime Canada, 1939-1945*; *Patriots and Proletarians: Politicizing Hungarian Immigrants in Interwar Canada*; *Union Power: Solidarity and Struggle in Niagara*, co-authored with Larry Savage, and with Ruth Frager, *Discounted Labour: Women Workers in Canada, 1870-1939*.

Ira Robinson is Professor of Judaic studies and Interim Chair, Institute for Canadian Jewish Studies, Concordia University. In the field of Canadian Jewish studies, Robinson has edited *An Everyday Miracle: Yiddish Culture in Montreal* (1990), *Renewing Our Days: Montreal Jews in the Twentieth Century* (1995), *Juifs et Canadiens Français dans la société Québécoise* (2000), *Not Written in Stone: Canadian Jews, Constitutions and Constitutionalism in Canada* (2003), *Les Communautés juives de Montréal: histoire et enjeux contemporains* (2010), and *Canada's Jews in Time, Space, and Spirit* (2013). He has published *Rabbis and Their Community: Studies in the Eastern European Orthodox Rabbinate in Montreal, 1896-1930* (2007).

Randal F. Schnoor, a sociologist, teaches at the Koschitzky Centre for Jewish Studies as well as the Department of Sociology at York University. He specializes in issues around Jewish identity construction in contemporary North America. He co-authored, with Alex Pomson, *Back to School: Jewish Day School in the Lives of Adult Jews* (2008) which was a finalist for the National Jewish Book Awards. In 2011 he guest-edited a special volume of the journal *Contemporary Jewry* with a focus on Jewish life in Canada. Since 2005 he has served as the President of the *Association for Canadian Jewish Studies*.

Jennifer Stephen is an Associate Professor of History at York University. She is the author of *'Pick one intelligent girl': Employability, Domesticity and the Gendering of Canada's Welfare State, 1939-1947*. University of Toronto Press, 2007, shortlisted for the Sir John A. Macdonald Prize (shortlist of 5) Canadian Historical Association. Her current research addresses the social history of life insurance in Canada.

Morton Weinfeld is a professor of Sociology at McGill University, where he holds the Chair in Canadian Ethnic Studies. He has published widely in many areas of modern Canadian Jewish studies, as well as in the fields of the sociology of minority groups in general. He is the author of the volume *Like Everyone Else but Different: the paradoxical success of Canadian Jews*, and co-author of *Old Wounds: Jews, Ukrainians and the Hunt for Nazi War Criminals in Canada*, with Harold Troper. He also coedited, with Harold Troper, the volume *Ethnicity, Politics, and Public Policy: Case Studies in Canadian Diversity*.